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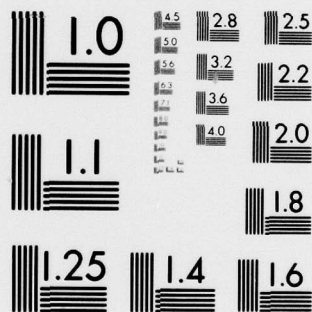
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6 INTELLIGENCE IN A DEMOCRACY
by Professor R. V. Jones
Aberdeen University

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DEVELOPED AT STATE DEPT SEMINAR ON 12/4/75

The following paper is based on a talk which I was invited to give in the State Department in Washington on 4th December 1975 on the subject of 'The Role of Intelligence in a Humanizing Democracy'. I am not sure of the significance of the adjective, but I take it to imply a democracy in which the individual is accorded his fullest possible rights and freedom in contrast with those forms of democracy in which most individuals are completely subjugated to the demands of the state.

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Classical Democracy

If we are to discuss any aspect of democracy we can hardly escape reference to the classic example of Athens. The most famous exposition of the principles of Athenian democracy is in the funeral speech by Pericles as recorded by Thucydides (History of the Peloponnesian War, Book II, Chapters 37-41, Jowett's Translation, Oxford University Press, 1881). Regarding national security, Pericles said:

'Our city is thrown open to the world, and we never expel a foreigner or prevent him from seeing or learning anything of which the secret if revealed to an enemy might profit him. We rely not on management or trickery, but on our own hearts and hands'.

I applaud the insistence of Pericles on the importance of morale, but when in 1939 I was writing my first wartime report on the need for a Scientific Intelligence Organization I quoted this passage and pointed out that Athens proceeded to lose the war.

Actually, I could have gone on to remark that, for all his ideas of a free democracy, Pericles almost contradicted himself in the same speech, for speaking of the war he said:

'Courage fighting in a fair field is fortified by the intelligence which looks down upon an enemy, an intelligence/

10/R.V./Jones

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So here we have in the classic democracy of Ancient Greece the simultaneous recognition that intelligence has its place in war, and yet that it tends to run counter to the principles of a free democracy.

Within a few years of Pericles, another Athenian - Plato - even questioned whether democracy represented a stable condition:

The democratic city is athirst for the wine of liberty.....
and then if its rulers are not absolutely obliging in
giving it liberty in plenty, it chastises them and
accuses them of being wicked oligarchs.....
Those that are obedient to the rulers, it reviles as
willing slaves and nobodies, but bestows honour and
praise in public and in private on rulers who are like
their subjects, and subjects who are like their
rulers.....The schoolmaster fears and
flatters his pupils, and the pupils despise both their
schoolmasters and their tutors. And altogether, the
young act like their seniors, and compete with them
in speech and in action; while the old men condescend
to the young and become triumphs of versatility and
wit, imitating their juniors in order to avoid the
appearance of being sour or despotic.....
and everything else in the state is equally full of
liberty.....That disease that appeared
in oligarchy and destroyed it, appears in this city
likewise, gains in size and strength, profiting by the
permission accorded to it, and enslaves democracy
.....tyranny arises from no other
constitution/

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constitution than democracy, severest and most cruel slavery following, I fancy, the extreme of liberty'. (The Republic. A.D. Lindsay's translation pp. 260-261, Everyman's Library, London, 1935).

So at one extreme of political theory we have complete individual freedom, which must result in chaos, and at the other extreme complete regimentation and subordination of the individual to the State. In the former, it would be very difficult to operate an intelligence organization, because all its moves would be continually exposed; in the latter, intelligence of a kind would be easy, but progress of any sort would be difficult, since this depends on individual initiative. Some optimum compromise has therefore to be found between these extremes, both for the State and for the intelligence organization itself. The need for compromise has long been recognized. Halifax, the Great Trimmer, held (1717) that the object of laws was to keep the balance 'between the excess of unbounded power and the extravagance of liberty not enough restrained' and the physicist Max Born (1956) gave virtually a re-statement of Halifax's words when he said 'Complete freedom of the individual in economic behaviour is incompatible with the existence of an orderly state, and the totalitarian state incompatible with the development of the individuum. There must exist a relation between the latitudes of freedom Δf and of regulation Δr of the type $\Delta f \cdot \Delta r = p$, which allows a reasonable compromise. But what is the 'political constant' p ? I must leave this to a future quantum theory of human affairs. The world which is so ready to learn the means of mass destruction from physics, would do better to accept the message of reconciliation contained in the philosophy of complementarity'.

Modern 'Democracies'

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As regards attempts at finding the optimum compromise, we have examples this century in China and Russia. A few months ago I was visiting China and among my notes of the visit there are the following comments:

'Mao himself subscribes, or certainly has subscribed, to the Doctrine of the Mean, and he believes that experts have their place, even though they should share in the work of the common people. Even though Confucius is now a subject of criticism, in that his Doctrine was essentially conservative (along the lines of "God bless the squire and his relations, and keep us in our proper stations") Mao has urged his people to "sum up history from Confucius to Sun Yat Sen, and take over this valuable legacy". His Communist Revolution has many admirable points, notably in its promotion of honesty, cleanliness, and decent and disciplined living. The comparison with Puritan England is a tempting one, even to the sombre clothing of the people. In the cities men are discouraged from marrying before they are 28, and women 25, and even then the intending pair have to obtain permission from their street Revolutionary Committees.

From their early years children are introduced to the fact that they are entering a society where everyone has to work for the common cause, and so they spend a few hours a week on such work as sweeping factories and university workshops. Both inside the classroom and outside they are highly disciplined, in a manner reminiscent of British schools before 1930.

Mao has an innately clever nation behind him: the Chinese were always good at thinking in three dimensions (for/

(for example, Chinese puzzles), a significant indicator of creative ability, and they have long shown great manipulative skill and craftsmanship. With all these human resources combined in the same direction, the potential of China could be enormous.

One point of doubt is whether the reaction against intellectuals has been carried too far, and whether the egalitarian society that has been promoted will succeed in recognizing and encouraging talent to the extent that would happen under another form of society.

Mao has succeeded, at least for the time being, in establishing one primary requisite for national success, in that by propaganda, education and personal example he has convinced the average individual that he can identify himself with the fortunes of his country, and has therefore given the Chinese a great sense of national purpose. And for all its sombreness, it was refreshing for us to spend some time in a society in which this sense prevailed. It should enable the Chinese to catch up on the Western nations, assuming that there is no catastrophe on the death of Mao. While they are still overtaking the West, they will continue to have a clear objective. What remains to be seen is whether, once they have caught up, their form of society will provide a satisfactory incentive and scope for individual initiative, or whether they will have to modify it to make a greater allowance for the weaknesses - and strengths - of human nature'.

On my return to Britain, I happened to re-read J.S. Mill's Essay on Liberty, published in 1859 and which Keith Feiling described as aiming at 'democracy guarded against the tyrannies of/

of ignorance and mobs' (A History of England, 1950). Criticizing the trend in Victorian Britain, Mill said:

'It is individuality that we war against: we should think we had done wonders if we had made ourselves all alike; forgetting that the unlikeness of one person to another is generally the first thing which draws the attention of either to the imperfection of his own type, and the superiority of another, or the possibility, by combining the advantages of both, of producing something better than either. We have a warning example in China - a nation of much talent, and, in some respects, even wisdom, owing to the rare good fortune of having been provided at an early period with a particularly good set of customs, the work, in some measure, of men to whom even the most enlightened European must accord, under certain limitations, the title of sages and philosophers. They are remarkable, too, in the excellence of their apparatus for impressing, as far as possible, the best wisdom they possess upon every mind in the community, and securing that those who have appropriated most of it shall occupy the posts of honour and power. Surely the people who did this have discovered the secret of human progressiveness, and must have kept themselves steadily at the head of the movement of the world. On the contrary, they have become stationary - have remained so for thousands of years; and if they are ever to be farther improved, it must be by foreigners. They have succeeded beyond all hope in what English philanthropists are so industriously working at - in making a people all alike, all governing their thoughts and conduct by the same maxims and rules: and these are the fruits'.

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It would therefore seem that some of the distinguishing characteristics of Imperial China have survived and indeed have been adapted by the communist revolution. We shall have to see whether substantial progress can be made under the Chinese system once they have caught up with the West in the current phase of technology, or whether - especially in view of Mill's comments - the system will have to be modified to give greater freedom for individual initiative to operate.

The communist experiment in Russia has already had to modify its approach, but clearly not enough for a discerning thinker like Andrei Sakharov who, in his conclusion to 'My Country and the World' (Random House, New York, 1975) describes several factors which he believes to be important for world survival. One of these is greater openness in the socialist countries, who have gone too far in the direction of regimentation but most pressing of all, he says, is a need for unity in the western countries which requires a leader 'and that leader, both by right and by virtue of its great responsibilities, is the United States - economically, technologically, and militarily the most powerful of the western countries'. I therefore propose to look at the role of an intelligence organization, in the light of my own experiences in Britain, in the hope that they may have some relevance in an American context.

The Ethics of Intelligence

We must accept that struggles, military or otherwise, between individuals and nations are a fact of existence. And any individual or organization who thinks that he or it has developed something worthwhile is entitled, within limits, to safeguard its continuation and further development. Since the consequent struggle will be the better conducted the more an organization knows about its opponent - and since a struggle may/

may not only be avoided but turned into co-operation if it becomes clear that the opponent does not represent a threat or if he has something better to offer - then a sensible nation will seek to be as well informed as possible about its opponents, potential or otherwise, and - for that matter - about its friends. It will therefore set up an intelligence organization, and an immediate question arises of the limits to which such an organization should go in the methods that it employs. Another question concerns the privileges that it must be accorded; and another is how to prevent the abuse of these privileges, either for personal gain on the part of individuals or for promoting the interests of cliques by giving them special advantages in the possession of information, or in covering up their inefficiencies or misdeeds from public scrutiny.

Internal Security

In addition to external intelligence, we have also to consider the need for intelligence internal to the nation itself. Acute as this problem has become at the present time it was foreseen long ago by Plato, in a passage immediately subsequent to that which I have already quoted. It arises from a

'class of idle and dissolute men; some of them are desperately brave and leaders of the whole, the rest are more cowardly and follow.....those two classes, when they arise, make a disturbance in the whole constitution, just as phlegm and bile disturb the body and he who is a good doctor and law-giver of a city must take as careful precautions against them as the wise bee-keeper does against drones. His first care must be not to let them get into the city; and his second, if he is frustrated in the first, to cut them out as quickly as possible, combs and/

and all.....in a democracy, you know, this class practically rules the State. The fiercest of them speak and act, and the rest crowd buzzing round the platform and won't hear of any opposition, so that almost everything in this constitution is managed by the drones.....The people would form a third class including all who work with their hands and take no part in affairs, who have got but few possessions, and in a democracy this class, when it is assembled, is the most numerous and most powerful. And therefore it always gets a share, so long as the leaders can manage to plunder the propertied classes, divide the spoil among the people, and yet keep the biggest share for themselves'.

Plato goes on to predict that the outcome of the consequent anarchy is a backlash which results in the people turning to a leader to pull them out of it, and that this leader will then develop into a tyrant. Although, for one reason or another, we may not go the whole way with Plato in his analysis, we have certainly in our generation seen the danger of dissident elements, encouraged from outside or not, and we have once again to draw a balance between freedom for reasoned objections to government and the restrictions entailed by any supervision and containment of dissidents. Here the immediate question is how far an internal intelligence system should be allowed to go in its invasion of the privacy of individuals or organizations, political, commercial, or otherwise.

The Methods of Intelligence

There is a wide range of means by which information can be gained, some depending mainly on instruments such as satellites or radar listening receivers or cryptographic devices, and others depending on human means such as direct penetration of/

of an opposing organization by an agent, or by listening to defectors or by subverting - or in the limit blackmailing or torturing - individuals belonging to the opposing organization. Some of these means I would categorize as 'clean' and others as 'dirty'.

Although the distinction can at times be a doubtful one, I would accept as 'clean' any method which does not involve subversion, blackmail or torture, with a grey area covering such matters as intercepting diplomatic mail or invading individual privacy by the use of such devices as hidden microphones. My concept of cleanliness concerns those methods which depend on being more industrious or cleverer than your opponent, and where he has a chance of stopping you if he is able enough and so wishes.

Photographic reconnaissance, for example, I regard as 'clean'. In this connection I did not agree with those critics of President Eisenhower who said that he should never have admitted knowing about the U-2 flights over Russia, in accordance with the traditional custom of governmental disowning of any Intelligence activities once they are discovered. Instead, I admired him for his forthrightness, and myself would have strengthened his case by the fact that some years before he had offered the Russians an 'open skies' policy. Looking further down the Presidential spectrum, I am not sure where I would place the original Watergate escapade, assuming that it had been done by one Party purely from its private resources, and had amounted to no more than hiding microphones to listen to the discussions of the other Party. I might have regarded it as unsporting, in a game which is notoriously dirty, but the issue was transformed by the subsequent lying.

We then come to subversion and ^{to} bribery, which exploits the cupidity of men for money, power or sex. These are distasteful/

distasteful operations for which it is impossible to develop enthusiasm but it is difficult to be dogmatic even when we consider such a black issue as physical torture. I myself certainly connived in stratagems to convince prisoners-of-war that we already knew so much that there was no point in their withholding from us any information that they might have, and this could perhaps be said to approach psychological torture. And we occasionally gave prisoners a few days of treatment that no more than minimally conformed with the Hague Convention, in the hope of stimulating their gratitude by later luxurious treatment.

I do not think that I would have acquiesced in the slightest in any idea of physical torture, and I can think of nothing in World War II which would have justified it. Moreover, we used to convince ourselves with the doctrine that torture would produce what the victim thought that you would like to hear rather than the truth. But I can imagine situations in which an opponent has fallen into one's hands, and where you know that he has information, for example the time and place of a bomb explosion, of of some even greater threat to you and your allies, where the decision whether to press him by physical means into talking could be a difficult one. I am grateful that I never had to face it.

The Privileges of Intelligence

Despite a very strong preference for clean methods in Intelligence, we would have to admit, at least so far as police work is concerned, that the security of the 'clean' world depends in part on a police force having contacts with a twilight zone between the ordinary public and the criminal world. And it is almost inevitable that any national intelligence system must have similar contacts. And, even if it did not, at least part of its success must depend on the privacy and security of its contacts/

contacts and sources, which will otherwise dry up for fear of exposure, not only to the citizens of the country for which they are working but, much more seriously, to their opponents. The recent assassination of the CIA representative in Athens is a sufficient example.

Even in a completely 'clean' intelligence organization it is still necessary to have a degree of freedom from scrutiny and public interest if the work is to be done effectively. I can recall that at the height of the V-2 Intelligence problem in 1944, my work was much impeded by having too great and widespread an interest taken in it. In telling Mr. Churchill that I must get relief from the too many enquirers and theorists who were continually wanting to know the situation, or to examine the evidence with a view to developing their own theories, I pointed out to him that one of my relaxations was going into a piece of unknown country and trying to find and stalk any hares that might be hidden. Left to myself, I would often come back with a hare; but I would have no hope of success if a committee of onlookers, even a benevolent one, insisted on walking behind me to see how I did it. Mr. Churchill promptly gave me a dispensation to ignore any committee that I thought would retard my work.

A completely 'open' intelligence system would be as difficult to operate as a completely 'open' system of diplomacy. I can recall a talk by the late Lord Vansittart, formerly Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the Foreign Office, in which he poured scorn on the pre-world war II policy of 'open covenants, openly arrived at' as being the very negation of diplomacy because they gave no room for the essential give and take before any Treaty can be reached. At the end of his lecture, I discussed another privilege of Intelligence with Lord Vansittart, pointing out to him that from my experience in MI6 I could see how easy it was for an intelligence organization to run adrift. This arises from the/

the right that the organization must have to recruit its staff without more than a minimum of external scrutiny. Supposing that the head of the organization is originally good, he will naturally want to recruit men who are both able and reliable. The obvious way of assessing reliability is from personal knowledge, and he will therefore tend to recruit men whom he already knows, and whom he believes to be able. And it would be the hope of any man who knows others who are able and reliable that these others would already be his friends. It does not take very many stages of recruitment on such a policy for it to degenerate into simply finding jobs for one's friends, and the whole system can thereby decay. Lord Vansittart, whilst agreeing with me, pointed out that there was another side: the salaries offered by MI6 in pre-war days were so low that it was only your friends whom you could hope to persuade to take the jobs.

Defects and Merits of MI6

Indeed, in 'My Silent War', (MacGibbon & Kee, London, 1968) Kim Philby ruefully tells how in 1940 he was turned down by the Government Code and Cypher School (then part of MI6) because Frank Birch, the Interviewing Officer, felt 'that he could not offer me enough money to make it worth my while'. Philby's subsequent acceptance by the Secret Intelligence side of MI6 (and also that of Guy Burgess, his friend, before him), was drastic evidence of the weakness of the system arising from its lack of professionalism. As will have been clear from the various published accounts, it did have some remarkably amateur aspects. I had much respect and affection for Stewart Menzies, the 'Chief' of MI6, but the following incident is not atypical of the way in which the Service was run.

One day in 1945 or 6, a very secret message came in/

in just as he was about to leave for a fashionable party in Mayfair or Belgravia. His cabinets were already locked, and so he stuffed the message into one of his pockets and left for the party. It happened that his hostess, to provide some entertainment for her guests, had engaged one of those deft gentlemen who can remove your braces without your realizing it, and who should he pick on but the Chief of the British Secret Service. Menzies afterwards told us how he stood in front of the assembled party while the entertainer removed pens, coins, wallet and so forth from his pockets, and waited for any moment for the embarrassing message to come out. By some fluke the entertainer either missed it or considered a piece of paper too trivial to display.

There was another diverting example of amateurishness in 1946, when MI6 was thinking of moving its premises. Its wartime headquarters at 54 Broadway had merely been rented, and there was some question of whether we would continue there after the war. Anyway, the landlord got the idea that we were going, or at any rate would not pay the rent, and somehow the Russian Trade Delegation came into contact with him and began to negotiate for a take-over. The first we heard about it was when the Security Officer came rushing round one Friday to say 'Take the maps off your walls, everybody, the landlord is showing the Russians round tomorrow afternoon!' and come round they did. I have sometimes since wondered what the Russian assessment of Philby was at about that time. He must have assured them that we were still in No. 54 Broadway, but they may well have doubted his words because it is hard to believe that even the British Secret Service could be such idiots as to let a Russian delegation walk round their offices.

But there is another side to all this. The same gentlemanly amateurishness which Philby found so easy to exploit was also an earnest of good faith. When Niels Bohr escaped from/

from Denmark, I introduced him to Menzies; and years afterwards Bohr told me that he had had no qualms about co-operating with the British Secret Service because he had found that it was run by a gentleman.

Intelligence and Politicians

An acute problem confronting an intelligence service from time to time concerns relations with politicians, and especially those who have been elected by the people into government. As a simple example of the problem, let us look at an incident about which I heard from my cryptographic colleagues during World War II and which, stimulated by the invitation to write these notes, I have now checked in detail.

It concerns the raid by the British Security authorities on the Russian trading firm in London, ARCOS, in 1927. The Conservatives under Mr. Stanley Baldwin were in power, and they were inevitably attacked by the Socialists for showing this hostility towards Communist Russia. Part of the evidence on which the raid had been based had come from the GC & CS success in breaking the Russian diplomatic code. Stung by the Socialist attack, Baldwin gave Parliament a full statement of the evidence on which the raid had been based, including reading out verbatim the text of the de-coded messages. The story as I heard it from the cryptographers was that he even read out at one point 'Group mutilated' (the standard cryptographic indication of an error in receiving the message) but Hansard (1927, Vol. 206, Column 1848) records him as saying at the relevant point ' -, there is one word missing - '. The result, of course, was gratis information to the Russians that we were reading their diplomatic codes, which were changed a fortnight later and were not since readable, at least up to the time that I left MI6 in 1946. And this from a Prime Minister who had achieved a reputation/

reputation for discretion with the phrase 'My lips are sealed!'

The question that I wish to bring out is whether or not the Intelligence Service should have provided Baldwin with the decoding evidence if it had foreseen that there was any risk that he would be so indiscreet. And while this was a simple, albeit disastrous, indiscretion it is easy to contemplate an even more difficult situation where the Chief of an Intelligence Service might have cause to suspect the Minister concerned not merely of indiscretion but of a positive sympathy for some foreign power or some dissident element in his own country to whom he would reveal the evidence deliberately. I can see no way out of the dilemma other than for the Intelligence Chief to have very considerable discretion in what he does or does not reveal even to the highest elected authorities of the people.

He may even at times have to disobey their instructions if he has evidence that obedience might in fact seriously harm his country. I myself did so on one occasion, which came about in the following way. The German agents operating in Britain had been effectively rounded up, and some of them were co-operating with us in providing false information for their masters. This was being done very successfully when the V-1 campaign opened in June 1944. The agents were naturally asked to report the points of impact of the flying bombs, and the problem that then confronted the Security Service was that if the agents provided false information about points of impact this could be checked by German photographic reconnaissance aircraft, and the deception would be revealed, not only as regards this particular campaign but also as regards all our other efforts at hoodwinking. On the other hand, if the agents were allowed to report accurate information, this would be aiding the enemy. Fortunately, I saw a possibility of confusing the Germans, and encouraging them to aim in error by letting the agents report accurate/

accurate points, but inaccurate times, of impact. Most of the bombs were in fact falling short, and by reporting predominantly points of impact of bombs that had tended to go further than the average, with the times of bombs that had in fact fallen short, I hoped that the Germans would be led to believe that even bombs which they might have had some reason to believe were falling short, were in fact tending to overshoot. Thus, if anything, they might tend to correct subsequent bombs so as to shorten their range.

A day or two after I had taken this decision, on which the Security Service then proceeded to act, the question somehow went up to the War Cabinet while Mr. Churchill was away in Italy and Mr. Morrison was in the Chair. Mr. Morrison ruled that since any attempt at deceiving the Germans would be an interference with Providence and that some people might be killed as a result of our deception (overlooking the fact that while this was likely to be true, more would be saved) we should provide accurate information to the Germans, and the Security Service came back to me asking what we should now do. Remembering Nelson at Copenhagen, I pointed out that I had no direct evidence of the Cabinet ruling, and that it was so incredible that I would only believe it if I saw it in writing. Until that time, I proposed not to countermand my original recommendation.

As we subsequently found, our deception was successful; and I mentioned the matter at a lecture I gave a year or two later at the R.A.F. Staff College. At the end of the lecture, one of the Directing Staff, Group Captain Earle (later Air Chief Marshal Sir Alfred Earle), got up and said that he could tell the other side of my story, for he was Air Secretary to the Cabinet at the time. He said that he had been worried about the Cabinet decision, and had wondered how he could/

could stop it becoming effective. The brilliant suggestion that he made to them was that the matter was so secret that it should not be put in writing. 'And', he added, 'I knew that that would be enough for you!'

So I believe that an Intelligence Chief should always bear in mind Admiral Fisher's comment on reading Jellicoe's Despatch after Jutland 'That man has all Nelson's qualities but one - he doesn't know how to disobey!'

The Abuse of Privilege

While insisting on the privileges that must be accorded to an Intelligence Service, especially in protecting its sources, I readily recognize that these privileges can be abused either intentionally or not. During World War II MI5 compiled a list of inventors who were suspected of working for the enemy. The theory behind the list was that one way by which the Germans could get information about British developments would be to have agents who would submit inventions, either bogus or plausible, to the British Service Ministries, with the hope that the reactions of the latter might give some clue as to the weapons that we were actually developing.

At one stage in the War, I was shown the list, and was astonished to find some of our most distinguished engineers on it, including one whose patriotism has rightly become a wartime and post-war legend. Against each name was also the name of the Ministry at whose request the inventor had been added to the list, and I saw that 80-90% of the names had all been added by one Ministry. I pointed this out to MI5, and asked for more detail about the official or officials in the Ministry concerned. It turned out that there was only one official involved, and that he was suffering from a persecution complex, so that all an inventor had to do to be suspected of working/

working for the Germans was to submit an invention to the Ministry concerned. There was no intended malice in this incident, but it shows one danger of unquestioned privilege.

There is an even greater danger in unquestioned privilege, which applies to any individual or organization who can exercise privilege by imposing a security restriction. For one thing mistakes can thereby be covered up, and for another individuals can increase their personal power by excluding others on the ostensible ground of security, because they think that these others might be able to do the job better.

I have no doctrinaire resolution to offer of this dilemma between the need for privilege and the need for some sanction to ensure that an individual, or group of individuals, should not overstep the limits of scrupulous behaviour. And I doubt whether it will ever be resolved by imposed regulation, or by Congressional or Parliamentary enquiry. Although these may succeed in circumscribing the limits, in the end it will always come down to the conscience of the individual.

Intelligence, Subversion and Sabotage

In 1939 MI6, whose head was known as 'C', had a Section D which was expected to organize sabotage; but this was soon separated off completely and it developed into the Special Operations Executive. This was fortunate for MI6 (the Secret Intelligence Service) in that the philosophies of SIS and SOE were basically different. The former took the longer term view that if it had an agent in a good position, one of its objects was to keep him there, even if it sometimes meant not using the information that he was providing, because he thereby might be compromised. SOE seemed to take a rather different view, regarding itself as engaged in a sabotage battle in which its agents were as expendable as front-line troops.

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There are basic reasons for maintaining the division in peace. Intelligence is a much more generally justifiable activity than sabotage, either of materiel or personnel; and in the public eye an intelligence organization that is suspected of also being responsible for sabotage is likely to be viewed unsympathetically, leading to such difficulties as demands for public enquiries and a reluctance for recruits to join the organization. The same also applies to a lesser extent to subversion, because in general it is itself distasteful to attempt to undermine the loyalty of a foreigner to his own country. Again, this is a 'grey' zone: if it is known that his country is attempting to subvert your own citizens, or that its government has thrown up an iron curtain and is feeding its citizens with propaganda and misrepresentations hostile to yourself, then it clearly becomes legitimate to try to get the truth about yourself across to any citizen of that country whom you may be able to contact. But again, even under provocation, I would prefer to keep subversion as an activity quite separate from intelligence.

The main operational difficulty in keeping activities such as intelligence, security, sabotage and subversion, entirely separate is that you then have the possibility of several clandestine organizations operating independently and getting their lines crossed. I once came across a case where MI6 had enlisted the services of a distinguished academic, whom they encouraged to show interest in his opposite numbers in one of the Iron Curtain countries. His resultant activities, mild though they were, came to the notice of MI5, who proceeded to watch him in the belief that he was working for the country in question. It was, in fact, a real life example of Compton Mackenzie's 'Water on the Brain'. It is therefore important that effective co-ordination should exist at a high level, such as a Joint Intelligence Committee, but of the two dangers I think/

think that the intelligence service will suffer less from having its lines crossed than from the adverse publicity associated with sabotage and subversion.

Public Relations

It is desirable that an intelligence service should not have a bad reputation in the democracy that it serves, unless there is a more than off-setting advantage in such a reputation in causing foreign powers to underestimate it. Provided that the service does not become involved in sabotage and subversion and does its proper job reasonably well, there is no reason why its reputation should not be good; but when it is attacked, as it inevitably will be and however good it is, by dissident elements, it may have difficulty in defending itself to the public if this involves breaking security - as Baldwin fatally did over the ARCOS Affair. As so often in other fields, the best defence may be pre-emptive attack - not aggression against dissident elements but a forthright propagation of ideas that there is a national need for intelligence and that it is a responsible, and not a furtive, occupation. Here it may be worth looking at the Danish Defence Intelligence Service, whose public relations officer, Lieutenant Colonel P.H.J. Borberg recently lectured in Lund University on this same theme. His Service actually provides assistance to the mass media, and it offers lectures to colleges, high schools, and other bodies in the hope of making the Danish public sensitive and sympathetic to the Service and its needs.

Differences between Britain and America

My own experience was, of course, almost entirely within the British context; and to relate to the American situation, it is necessary to allow for some fairly essential differences. In/

In the first place, Britain has no written Constitution, and on the whole I believe this to be an advantage. I used to think that there was much to be said for a written Constitution in which everyone knew exactly where he stood but, in the light of experience, I have long preferred an unwritten Constitution because no written Constitution, however relevant it may have been at the time that it was promulgated or amended, can be completely up-to-date, or allow for the many variants of a situation as it develops in the light of technological and sociological factors. An unwritten Constitution, although open to various forms of abuse, therefore places rather more responsibility on its officials while at the same time giving them rather more freedom in their actions.

A further difference, which may have stemmed from the first, is our doctrine of ministerial responsibility. Traditionally it has been impossible for a civil servant to be called to account by Parliament for his actions, in the way that frequently occurs in Congressional investigations. His Minister has to bear the brunt of any criticisms, and it has been traditional (although there is a regrettable tendency now to depart from this tradition) for the Minister concerned to resign if his Ministry was at fault, rather in the tradition of the Captain going down with his ship. Although this is frequently unjust to the Minister or Captain concerned, it places him in a special position which in general those responsible to him will recognize. If, as an official, you know that your Minister's career could be ruined by one of your own actions, you are more likely to respect his orders. When, for example, at the Coronation Naval Review of 1953 the Russians sent the Sverdlovsk to take part in the Review, I happened to be in Washington, where the Directors of Intelligence of the American Services told me that they hoped that we would be taking all the photographs of her that we could.

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I told them that I was sure that both the Director of Naval Intelligence and his opposite number in the Air Force would have arranged for suitable action, but I was surprised on my return to London to find that no photographs had been taken. It turned out that the question had gone up to the Air Minister, who happened to be Lord de l'Isle and Dudley, himself a holder of the Victoria Cross and descendent of Sir Philip Sidney, for his approval, and that he had ruled that it would be an act of gross discourtesy to our Russian visitors; and despite our Intelligence interest his ruling was instantly obeyed. Once again this doctrine of ministerial responsibility at the same time gives greater freedom from scrutiny and at the same time, perhaps, a greater sense of responsibility to the permanent officials.

Finally, we have our various Official Secrets Acts, which do not have their counterpart in America, and these have made it easier for the authorities to move against any substantial violation of security.

The foregoing factors may be the results of a rather deeper difference. The United States are just coming up to their Bicentennial, whereas the British experience, especially in being closely concerned with neighbouring powers of comparable strength, is much longer. The latter experience obviously has its disadvantages, especially in a reluctance to adaptation to new situations, but it might be worth while for our American authorities to examine some of our practices, which have been forged out of several more centuries of experience. Allen Dulles, for example, thought our Official Secrets Acts and D Notice system well worth looking at, although he rightly criticized our methods of recruiting personnel in sensitive areas.

There is also the matter of size. Up to about 1850, Britain's relatively small size was certainly no disadvantage, and even an advantage. The nation was coherent, news and ideas/

ideas travelled rapidly, and the nation could react relatively quickly to any threat or change of policy; and the exchange of ideas and experience was easy, for example, between the inventors of the Industrial Revolution. As a result, Britain was more than able to hold its own in comparison with such large, dispersed countries as Russia and China. But successive inventions such as the railway and the telegraph which facilitated political, intellectual, industrial and military coherence in the largest nation have destroyed the advantage that Britain once possessed.

Our Intelligence Services have remained relatively small, and as late as the 1939-45 War this was still an advantage. For example, the total number of officers in my Scientific Intelligence headquarters was no more than eight in 1945, and for most of the War had been substantially less. One advantage of such small numbers was that there was no need for an internal minuting system - I was conscious that if we became a little larger we would need such a system, and this would automatically demand further staff, and so on. We intentionally remained below this critical size, and thus maintained our speed of reaction.

I would still recommend keeping an intelligence organization as small as possible, but I recognize that much of the painstaking work in which it must be involved may well require large numbers, for example in interpreting photographs and here much must have been learnt in America in the control of large organizations, especially in the Space programme, which has achieved spectacular results such as we in Britain could never hope to emulate.

Conclusion

I doubt whether I have said anything new about the place and need for intelligence and security in a democracy. Much has already been said by Allen Dulles in 'The Craft of Intelligence' (Weidenfeld/

(Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1963) and, as he pointed out, some of the ideas go back to Sun Tzu around 400 B.C. in China. The problem will always be to strike the best balance between secrecy and openness, and it seems impossible to lay down a rigid set of rules and laws that may not be unduly restrictive and disadvantageous on one side or unduly capable of abuse and thus disadvantageous on the other. I remember discussing this matter with Percy Sillitoe, when he was head of MI5 and I was Director of Scientific Intelligence during Winston Churchill's second Premiership. He was telling me of some of his problems, and how he did not always succeed in catching spies and subversive agents. I asked him whether he needed more power. 'No', he replied, 'for that could make England into a police state. The worst thing for this country would be for it to be turned into a police state'. Banging his desk, he added 'And I say that as head of MI5!'

So long as we have men of that outlook at the top of our intelligence services, these services are unlikely to go far wrong, at least in threatening democracy, but the question then arises of who appoints the men; and in the end this comes down to Presidents and Prime Ministers, and who appoints them. If the answer is the people, then we must go back to George Washington and 'promote as an object of primary importance the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened'. 'Without that there is no hope for democracy.'

13th January 1976.

R.V. Jones